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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign  
Agricultural  
Services

Farm Service  
Agency

1400 Independence  
Avenue, SW  
Stop 0501  
Washington, DC  
20250-0539

**TO:** Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs  
Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs  
Deputy Administrator for Management  
Deputy Administrator for Commodity Operations  
Deputy Administrator for Field Operations  
Office of External Affairs  
Office of Civil Rights

**FROM:** *for* James R. Little  
Administrator

*Verle E. Linn*

**SUBJECT:** Budget and Performance-Based Management System Initiative – Your Continued Support is Vital

We are now more than 3 months into the Agency's Budget and Performance-Based Management System (BPMS) initiative. BPMS is a long-term business and cultural transformation for the entire Agency. With your cooperation and support, I know BPMS will provide us with the ability to effectively link our budget to measurable goals. The end results will be better customer service, enhanced operational efficiency and effectiveness, and greater value for the American taxpayer.

To date, as you know, the focus of the effort has been on developing a new Farm Service Agency (FSA) Strategic Plan, which will cover Fiscal Years 2004-2008. The strategic planning effort officially kicked off with the Senior Leadership Conference held on October 20, 2003. During that session, four draft strategic goals were developed. Those goals became the starting point for developing the new Agency Strategic Plan. Since then, input has been obtained from Agency managers and employees regarding goals, strategies, and performance measures. In addition, we have held a series of dialogue sessions to obtain feedback from customers and stakeholders on how FSA might better meet their needs and how success should be measured.

Currently, we are holding Program Manager Workshops, which are designed to refine the input received from the stakeholders and further develop strategies and performance measures. The first round of workshops was held January 12-15, with round two January 27-30, and round three scheduled for February 5-6. To ensure the success of the workshops, it is critical that participants attend all sessions for which they are scheduled and that they stay the entire day. Unfortunately this has not always been the case. Senior Management must commit to full staff attendance and keep those commitments.

A Senior Management Briefing will be held on Thursday, February 5, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., in Room 5071-S, to provide an update on development of the Strategic Plan. I ask that you make every effort to attend this session.

**Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs**  
**Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs**  
**Deputy Administrator for Management**  
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The information obtained from Agency managers and employees in these dialogue sessions and workshops, will form the foundation of the draft Strategic Plan scheduled to be completed in April. Attached for your reference is a timeline, which includes the key milestones and dates for completion of the Strategic Plan.

The BPMS Core Team (see attachment), comprised of representatives from each of your areas and the Office of Business and Program Integration, has managed the BPMS initiative since its inception. I would like to commend the Core Team for their outstanding work on developing the new Strategic Plan, and also thank each of you for supporting this farsighted initiative, which is critical to FSA's future. In this environment of constrained fiscal resources, we must be able to show results in order to effectively compete for increasingly scarce government resources. Since the long-term nature of the BPMS effort requires a sustained commitment from the Core Team, we will be developing a charter that formalizes and defines the authority, roles, and responsibilities of FSA's BPMS Core Team. Your Core Team member will attend a local retreat this spring to develop the Charter.

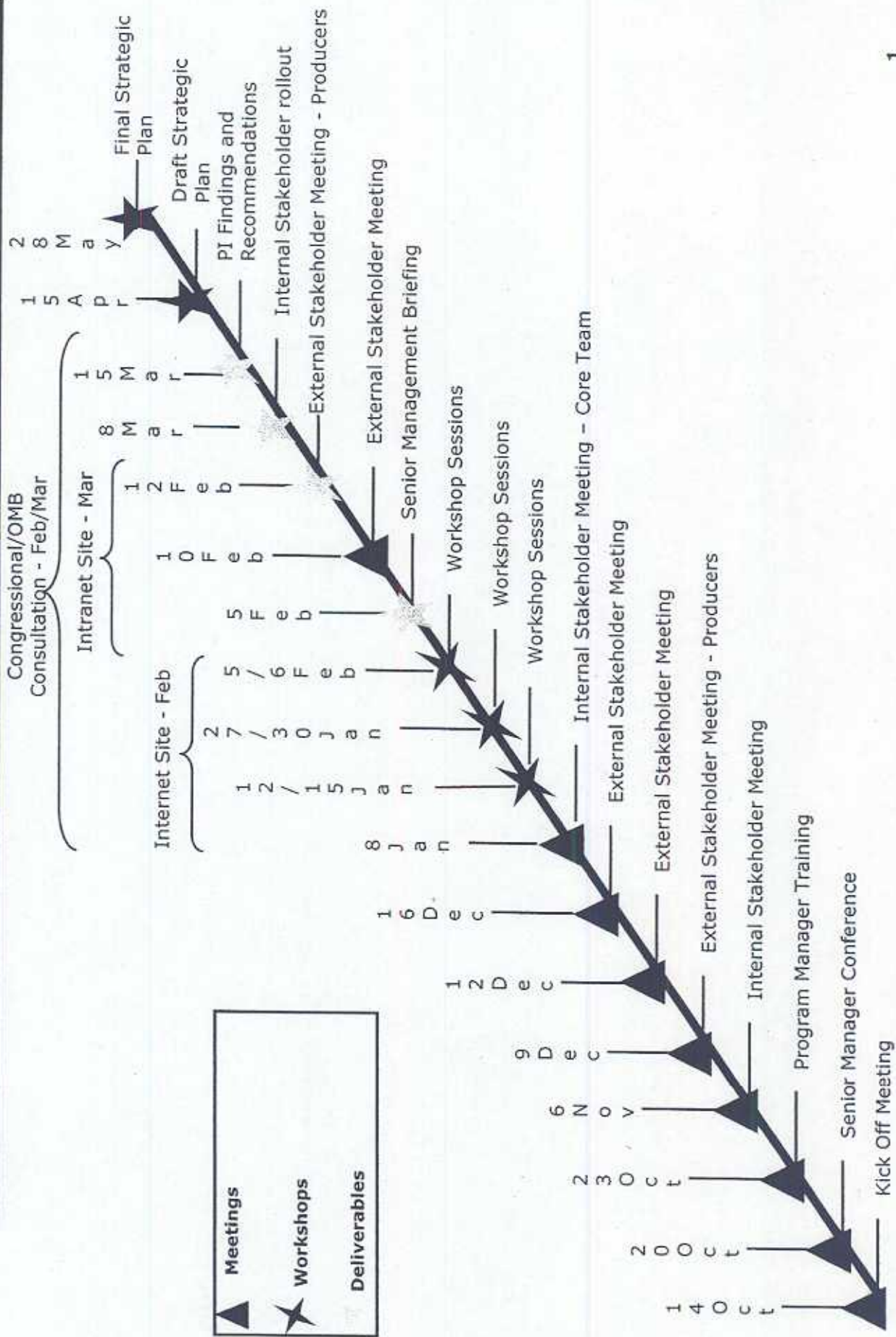
In addition to the Core Team, a BPMS Communications Team is being established. The Communication Team's primary mission will be to develop an effective communication strategy for providing information on the Strategic Plan and the broader BPMS initiative to all FSA employees. Please contact Karen Malkin, Director, Strategic Planning Staff at 202-418-9064, should you have any questions or interest in assisting the Communications Team.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to this critical initiative. I know that working hand-in-hand we will successfully transform our Agency for the good of all Americans.

Attachments



# Development of Strategic Plan, FY 04-08





**Farm Service Agency**  
**Budget and Performance-Based Management System Initiative**  
**Core Team**

Name	Room	Office	Phone	E-mail Address
<b>Core Team Members</b>				
Dennis Taitano, Co-Chair Director, Budget Division	4747-S	DAM/BUD	202-720-3674	<a href="mailto:Dennis_Taitano@wdc.usda.gov">Dennis_Taitano@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Karen Malkin, Co-Chair Director, Strategic Planning Staff	5430-L	OBPI/SPS	202-418-9066	<a href="mailto:Karen_Malkin@wdc.usda.gov">Karen_Malkin@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Bob Bonnet Chief, Guaranteed Loans Branch	240-P	DAFLP/LMD	202-720-3889	<a href="mailto:Bob_Bonnet@wdc.usda.gov">Bob_Bonnet@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Linda Treese Assistant to the Deputy Administrator	3712-S	DAFO	202-720-4698	<a href="mailto:Linda_Treese@wdc.usda.gov">Linda_Treese@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Candy Thompson Assistant to the Deputy Administrator	5968-S	DACO	202-720-6004	<a href="mailto:Candy_Thompson@wdc.usda.gov">Candy_Thompson@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Paul Gutierrez Assistant Deputy Administrator	3612-S	DAFP	202-720-8513	<a href="mailto:Paul_Gutierrez@wdc.usda.gov">Paul_Gutierrez@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Rob Wiley Chief, Communications Services Section	3624-S	OEA	202-720-8768	<a href="mailto:Robert_Wiley@wdc.usda.gov">Robert_Wiley@wdc.usda.gov</a>
<b>Core Team Alternates</b>				
Galen VanVleet Senior Loan Officer	240-P	DAFLP/LMD	202-720-1186	<a href="mailto:Galen_VanVleet@wdc.usda.gov">Galen_VanVleet@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Monty Tranbarger Chief, Accounting Systems and Planning Staff	220	DAM/KCFO	816-823-1636	<a href="mailto:MDTRANBARGER@kcc.usda.gov">MDTRANBARGER@kcc.usda.gov</a>
Deborah Johnson Program Analyst	3709-S	DAFO/FOS	202-720-0067	<a href="mailto:Deborah_Johnson@wdc.usda.gov">Deborah_Johnson@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Salomon Ramirez Assistant to the Deputy Administrator	3612-S	DAFP	202-690-0902	<a href="mailto:Salomon_Ramirez@wdc.usda.gov">Salomon_Ramirez@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Jim Goff Special Programs Manager	5956-S	DACO/WID	202-720-5396	<a href="mailto:James_Goff@wdc.usda.gov">James_Goff@wdc.usda.gov</a>
<b>Core Team Senior Advisors</b>				
Tom Hofeller Director, Office of Business & Program Integration	3702-S	AO/OBPI	202-720-1068	<a href="mailto:Tom_Hofeller@wdc.usda.gov">Tom_Hofeller@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Burton Eller Director, Office of External Affairs	3615-S	OEA	202-720-3865	<a href="mailto:Burton_Eller@wdc.usda.gov">Burton_Eller@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Kristine Chadwick Director, Financial Management Division	12-POC	DAM/FMD	703-305-1386	<a href="mailto:Kristine_Chadwick@wdc.usda.gov">Kristine_Chadwick@wdc.usda.gov</a>



Name	Room	Office	Phone	E-mail Address
<b>Core Team Advisors</b>				
Bruce Blanton Staff Assistant	3086-S	AO	720-3467	<a href="mailto:Bruce_Blanton@wdc.usda.gov">Bruce_Blanton@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Ed Rall Deputy Director	3726-S	OBPI/EPAS	202-720-7795	<a href="mailto:Ed_Rall@wdc.usda.gov">Ed_Rall@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Steve Sanders Deputy Director	5768-S	DAM/TTSD	202-720-7796	<a href="mailto:Steve_Sanders@wdc.usda.gov">Steve_Sanders@wdc.usda.gov</a>
James Love Accountant	KCFO	DAM/KCFO	816-926-1446	<a href="mailto:JTLove@kcc.usda.gov">JTLove@kcc.usda.gov</a>
Steve Mikkelsen E-Gov Coordinator	3704-S	OBPI	202-720-4019	<a href="mailto:Steve_Mikkelsen@wdc.usda.gov">Steve_Mikkelsen@wdc.usda.gov</a>
<b>SPS Team Members</b>				
Rafael Cotto Management Analyst	5434-L	OBPI/SPS	202-418-9057	<a href="mailto:Rafael_Cotto@wdc.usda.gov">Rafael_Cotto@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Ken Hill Management Analyst	5435-L	OBPI/SPS	202-418-9062	<a href="mailto:Kenneth.Hill@wdc.usda.gov">Kenneth.Hill@wdc.usda.gov</a>